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THE
Banner of Injustice,
AND
Endlesse Oppression,

Displayed to the worlds view :

OR,
The CASE of *John Rayment*, Citizen
and Baker of London, stated.

Who for these fifteen years hath been causlessly, maliciously, and wickedly sued in the Law, and most unjustly persecuted and imprisoned in the Fleet, by the wicked prosecution of one *John Johns*, now one of the Paymasters for the Souldiers and Widdowes at Ely-house in Holborn, London.

Published by *John Rayment*, for the manifestation of the truth, satisfaction to all honest, well-minded people, and for the vindication of his own innocency. From the Fleet this 24. of the third moneth called May, 1650.

*Truth from Injustice may hap to reap some blame,
Yet truth shall stand, Injustice shall reap the shame.*

Probatum est.

That it is the glory of a Nation to advance the free administration of Justice, Judgment, and Mercy in the Land, is true: That it is the strict command of God imposed on all Nations (that professe the saving knowledge of him) so to do, is most true: That they are joynded not to oppress one another in judgement, nor to rule one over another with rigor, is as true: For which *Samuel* (the great Judge in Israel) is a perfect rule and example, who set all Israel at defiance to lay to his charge any act of injustice or oppression, or the receiving of any bribe or gift, (now called Fees;) By the practise of the contra-

Lev. 19. 15

15.
See Lev.

25. 35. 46.

2 Chron.

19. 5. 6. 7.

2.

1 Sam. 12.

3.

Witnesse
the many
Goals and
prisons of
cruelty in
this Land,
devised by
the Devils
children
for the
murther-
ing of
poore and
innocent
men and
women, as
thousands
have been.

ry not only my self, but millions of men and women in this Land are oppressed, inflaved, ruined, yea, destroyed in their Estates, Rights, Liberties, and Lives, to the high displeasure of God, and dishonour of this Nation.

For the more clearer manifestation of the truth hereof to all men in the world, I have thought good to make a full (yet brief) relation of all my fifteen years troubles, vexations, and most unjust oppressions, suffered to the ruine of my Estate, and losse of my Liberty in these my aged and weak dayes, in and by reason of a most unjust Suit impiously and causlessly commenced by one *John Johns* (now one of the Clerks and Paymasters at Ely-House in Holborne) about fifteen years since against me, that then was an Inhabitant of the Parish of *Ethelberts* within Bishops-gate, London, above thirty years continuance, where I bore all Offices both in my Parish and Company, and from the very first appeared most forward (and so have ever since continued) and free to advance the service and peace of the Nation in the Parliaments Cause; which is as followeth.

Richard Johns Merchant (brother to the said *John Johns*, being a young man of a very mean fortune, came as a Lodger to my house in the year, 1628. and there continued the space of seven years, where in all that time he had his diet, lodging, washing, and other necessities free, without paying any thing for them; with whom I became partner in his Trade to Virginia, and to whom both I and my wife advanced a stock of money for managing the Trade, and also lent him sundry times severall sums of money, and have stood bound for him severall times for four or five hundred pound at a time: At the end of seven years this *Richard Johns* fell sick in my house, and was then justly indebted to me (by an account made up by himselfe, not long before his death) somewhat above 700*l*. who then upon his death-bed being in perfect memory, and two or three dayes before his death in the presence of divers honest people, called his said brother *John Johns* to him, ordained him his Executor, and most strictly charged him to pay me the said 700*l*. affirming then to all there present, that he had left a sufficient estate to pay all men with a good Surplusage, and charged the said *John Johns* to pay me first of all, which he then accordingly promised to do, and then say-

ing.

ing, I were a very villaine if I should deale otherwise then justly and honestly with our friend *M. Rayment*, and soon after this his brothers death, the said *John Johns* acknowledged, that his brother died of a good estate, and then payed me in part of my 700*l.* due, the sum of 250*l.* but then taking wicked counsell of some sons of *Belial*, (no doubt, but of some Lawyer or Atturney) he refused to pay me the rest, (having gotten all his brothers books into his custody) unlesse I could prove the debt remaining, being 450*l.* Thereupon I commenced suit against him in Guild-hall, proved the debt and recovered the said remainder, being 450*l.* the spirit of *Johns* being hereby through evill counsell exasperated against me, (though unjustly) he files a Bill against me in 1636. in the Court of Requests, where I answered, and came to a hearing, and at hearing nothing being proved by *Johns* against me, instead of a just dismissal, the Lord Privie Seal commits the matter unto Referrees, viz. *M. Lee*, and *M. Smith*, who by reason of *Johns* his turbulence of spirit, were constrained to return severall times sundry Certificates, and yet by all these severall Certificates they clearly proved and declared, that there was not any thing authentickly proved by *Johns* against me, either by Merchant-like books of Accompt, or by testimony, and that I owed nothing to *Johns*: Upon the return of the last of these Certificates, *Johns* thus receiving the foyle, makes means in a way to the Lord Privie Seale for another reference, and procured the matter to be referred unto *Mr. Lee*, and *Mr. Northie*, who also made divers Certificates, and then in their full and finall Certificate, they thereby certifie, that there appeared to be nothing at all due to *Johns* from me; but *per contra*; that the said *Johns* appeared to be justly indebted to me in the sum of 54*l.* 7*s.* 6*d.* as by their Certificate (ready to be produced) more clearly appeareth. But before their returne then made of this their finall Certificate, the said *Johns* finding his wicked unjust dealings discovered by those Referrees, makes his private addresse to the Lord Privy Seale again, and procures from him yet another reference in the cause, to three of the Clerks of the said Court of Requests, viz. *M. Laine*, *M. Bickerstaffe*, and one more, who most unjustly and corruptly without ever hearing me,

Note, that
John Johns
bath confessed to
divers,
that his
brother
died worrh
2200*l.* all
debts paid;
and that
all this
was gain-
ed by the
blessing of
God, and
the friend-
ly assistance
of *Mr.*
John
Rayment.

M. Lees,
and *Mr.*
Smiths
severall
Certificates.

M. Lees,
& *M. Northies*
Certificate.

me, or any other for me, did forthwith certifie (no doubt but by vertue of *Johns* Angells) that I was indebted to *John Johns* in no lesse then 537.l. 19.s. 6.d. yet doubting of their grosse error committed by that Certificate, they submit the same to the wisdom of that Court, viz. to the Lord Privie Seal, and so left it doubtfull. The Court of Requests immediately after this being put downe (and the decess of the Lord Privy Seal) the said *John Johns* then sued me in the Court of Obstructions, where also at the day of hearing nothing being proved against me by *Johns*, instead of a just dismissal, the cause was againe by *M. Prideaux* referred to *M. Page*, (a Master in Chancery) in whose hands it rested a long time, and then *John Johns* moves the Court of Chancery to have other Witnesses examined in the cause, and thereupon prefers another Bill in Chancery against me, which Bill being by me answered, then *Johns* moves to have the cause againe referred to the said *Mr. Page*, whereafter severall dayes of my tedious wearisome attendance, without any perusall of Books, or any other papers of prooffe, (other then what was by *Johns* himself only perused) the said Master *Page* drawes up a Report, and thereby very modestly and truly certifieth, that *John Johns* had not in all that time produced to him any Ledger Book, or Merchant-like Accompt, or any authentick prooffe, whereby it might appeare that I was indebted to him: Yet at the last in and by the said Report he most unjustly confirmes the false and unjust Report formerly made by the three Clerks of the Court of Requests, whereby they certifie me to be indebted to *Johns* 537.l. 19.s. 6.d.

Anno.
1646.

This unjust Report of *M. Pages* being thus gained by *Johns*, he forthwith moves the Lords Commissioners for the Great Seale, who were then the Earl of *Manchester*, and *M. William Lenthall* the Speaker of the House, who upon the said motion, and *M. Pages* Report, presently ordered, That I should bring in to the Court the said 537.l. 19.s. 6.d. and that then the truth of the matter should be tried by them afterwards; (that is, whether I did owe any thing to *John Johns*, or not I although in above thirteen years suit and debate of the matter, there was never any thing justly proved against me to this day, nor that ever it appeared that I owed *Johns* one penny:.) Upon sight of this

this unreasonable disorderly Order, I refused to yeeld any obedience unto it; thereupon I was taxed with sleighting the Order of Court, and then forthwith I was examined upon Interrogatories to that effect, to which I answered, that I did not sleight the Orders of Court, but that my adversary *John Johns* had now more then thirteen years most maliciously, vexatiously and causlessly molested and sued me in severall Courts to my great damage; and that in all that time he had not proved penny, nor pennyworth against me, (as due from me to him) and that if ever he had, or yet can (by sufficient evidence) prove any thing justly due to him, I shall be ready to pay it without any further trouble: After this my examination thus taken, *John Johns* presently moves the Court of Chancery for my commitment to the Fleet, which his unjust request was by the Speaker presently granted, and I was accordingly committed and imprisoned in the Fleet, where I have now continued in close durance above eight and twenty moneths, without any just cause by them shewed hitherto for their so doing, that thus unjustly committed me.

Where after some time of abode, I was by Councell learned, advised to commence a suit in Law for ~~the~~ imprisonment against the said *John Johns*, *Henry Hopkins*, the Warden of the Fleet, *Thomas Rivet* his Clerk, and *Matthew Pitts* his servant, which being done accordingly, they then stayed me from gain- May 8.
ing of a Judgement by an Injunction out of the Chancery 1650.
(which Court of Chancery I alwayes apprehended to be ordained for relief of the oppressed against cruell oppressors, and not to be a Court for support and strengthening of cruell oppressors against poore oppressed and distressed men and women,) and then to acquit themselves from further trouble; on the 9. of May, 1650. the Warden of the Fleet shewed, and read May 9.
to me an Order of Chancery (as he called it) in the presence of 1650.
his aforesaid Clerk and servant, for the restraining of me close prisoner in my little chamber in the Fleet; but after the reading of the said Order, instead of confining me to my chamber, he the said Warden of the Fleet commanded his servants to lay hold of me, and have me into the loathsome dark Dungeon called the Common Wards of the Fleet, conceiving that by the
noysom

noyſome ſtrench and dampneſſe of the place they ſhould have ſoon gained a period to their unexpected trouble: But after ſeven dayes ſtay there, (things no wayes anſwering their cruell intentions and expectations) they then cauſed me to be returned to my former chamber of nine foot ſquare, (furniſhed with mine owne goods) and there they cauſed me to be locked up cloſe, with a padlock on the out-ſide of my door, but ſithence they having taken off the Padlock, do ſtill confine me cloſe priſoner to my chamber, and debar me of the aire, and benefit of the common Priſon-yard, allotted by God to every creature to breath in.

Thus notwithstanding the diſſolution of the head of tyranny, the Courts of Star-chamber and high Cmmiſſion, by the Parli-ment declared, barbarous, cruell, and deteſtable, and that priſoners confinement to their chambers is a cruelty, invented for the murthering and deſtroying of men, the whole circumference of priſons being a confinement in all reaſon ſtrict, and cloſe enough, and that it is man-ſlaughter in any Goaler to confine any Fellow to cloſer reſtraint then ordinary before conviction, [as in the Caſe of Sir Richard Wiſeman, and Sir Michael Green, who ~~was~~ murdered by eight yeares cloſe reſtraint in his chamber in the Fleet,] much leſſe an honeſt Commonwealths-man moſt wrongfully reſtrained: Yet this Goaler of the Fleet and his Subſtitutes aſſuming to themſelves a tyrannous power, ſurpaſſing the late regall power, do uſe and abuſe men committed to their cuſtody, at their pleaſure, and exact of them what Fees they pleaſe without controule, and confine men to their chambers, yea, drag them out of their chambers, place and diſplace them at their pleaſure, upon the leaſt private grudge or diſtaſte by them taken againſt a Priſoner, either for his declaring their cruelties practiſed, or reſuſing to ſatiſſie their greedy inſatiate minds with ſuch large illegal ſums of money by them daily required of him for fees and chamber-rent.

But if Goalers be thus ſuffered ſtill to oppreſſe and exact, then may they under colour of the priſoners non-payment of their exactions (bearing malice to a priſoner) drag them out of their chambers into their dungeons, or by cloſe reſtraint

to their chambers and other misusage, murther and destroy them at their pleasure.

By reason of all which severall cruell oppressions, unjust proceedings in Courts, and excessive charges and expence of my estate in the Law for these fifteen years, I have been driven from my trade, ruined in my estate above 2000.l. and thereby inforced to sell the remainder of my houses and goods (to feed Lawyers, Atturneyes, Solicitors, and Goalers) in defence of innocency and truth; whereby I am now disabled to expresse my readinesse for the service of the State as formerly I have done, in freely advancing 300.l. for the reducing of Ireland, and by lending freely 200.l. upon the Publike Faith many years since, (as yet resting due to me from the State) as also maintaining men in their service upon my own charge formerly; of all which I am now constrained (by reason of these my troubles) to crave a speedy repayment by the State.

Thus may all men in me (as in a glasse) behold their owne miserable slavery to the wills of unjust and cruell men, and the ruine of their Estates, Liberties, and Lives, wrought by corrupt Judges, deceitfull Lawyers, and cruell Goalers; by whom (of being profitable members in this Common-wealth) they are made poore uselesse drones, yea, buried alive in Goals and Prisons, (a cruelty abhottred by Heathens) and thereby ever after disabled to serve the State.

Note this
I beseech
you all ye
Inhabi-
tants of
England.

Wherefore being left remediesse and hopelesse of ever gaining justice and relief from those by whose unjust Reports and Orders I have all this time, and still do suffer wrongfully in the losse of my Estate and Liberty: I do therefore most humbly appeale to the high and honourable Court of Parliament, beseeching them in the bowells of compassion to commiserate these my wrongfull sufferings, and according to the pious impartiall rules of justice and mercy, to call before them the said *John Johns*, commanding him to produce all such Bills, Bonds, Accompts, and Proofs, as he hath under my hand, or the hand of the said *Richard Johns*, to manifest that (his falsly pretended) debt of 537.l. 19.s. 6.d. (if he have any) for which I stand unjustly committed to the prison of the Fleet, it having for these thirteen years clearly appeared, that he hath neither

Rayment
his hum-
ble suit to
the Par-
liament.

Bill.

Bill nor Bond, nor any accompt under my hand for any thing, nor that ever I owed him penny, or penny worth in all my life, that then upon the manifestation of this truth, this honorable Assembly will be pleased to order my discharge out of prison, with full reparation for my wrongfull sufferings and losses thereby sustained in my estate from the said *Iohns, Hopkins, Rivet* and *Piss*, and in the mean time to enjoy my chamber quietly, and the free use of the Prison-yard, as others do; and that by justice the said *Iohn Iohns* may be made an example to deter all other such like evill minded, cruell, vexatious persons from troubling, molesting, and vexing honest quiet men causlessly in the Law, as I have been these many yeares, and many thousands in this Land are to this day, to the high displeasure of God, and dishonor of this Nation.

FINIS.

